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To John With Kindest  
Regards

# BRICKS ON THE CHIMNEY

B.F.



FACTS AND<sup>4</sup>FOIBLES  
OF JAMAICA, IOWA  
BY BRUCE F. TOWNE

— FOREWORD —

An old Jamaica legend has it that an early pioneer would cement another brick on his chimney top each time one of his competitors suspended business. It was his way of "noting" his gun."

Many "bricks" have been laid since our town originated. In the process we have found our search into the past interesting. So in this little book we will try to bring you some of the personalities and events of our town as we recall them or as they have been related to us by friends.

I was fascinated by many of these stories in the days of my youth as father and his friends would visit and "chew the fat" around the stove in dad's old general store.

The traveling salesmen of the early day with their sample trunks would spend perhaps a half day with each account and always had time for story telling. One would hear not only the "seven" original stories but also many of the variations. Surprisingly enough are considered fresh material on TV news days.

Other experiences have been related to me in recent years by those remaining of the past generation. Some allowance must be made for the frailty of human memory but we have striven for as much accuracy as possible.

Much of the material used herein was gathered from the following sources: The History of Guthrie and Adair counties, Jamaica — "where it is and what it is" by Walter E. Gore (1900), the Jamaica Joker, the Jamaica Journal and the county proceedings of the Town of Jamaica.

We are very grateful to Uncle Guy and Aunt Leota Toomey, our cousins Cora, Myra and Ivar Towne, J. P. Aylsworth and the many others who contributed material and encouraged us in our task.

"From yon blue heavens above us bent,  
the gardner Adam and his wife  
smile at the claims of long descent." —Tennyson

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The origin and nature of the peoples who roamed the prairies of this country before the arrival of the red man is still a mystery. Recent discoveries of prehistoric burials would seem to indicate that men were in these parts some 10,000 years ago.

The American Indian was perhaps a branch of the Mongolian group which at some distant period in the past found its way from Asia to this land. Their immediate ancestors were the Mound Builders who left many exhibits of their way of life in many parts of Iowa.

The first Europeans to set foot on Iowa soil were Marquette and Joliet. The former was a Jesuit Father and the latter an agent of the French government. Nine years later in 1682 LaSalle descended the mighty Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico. Thereupon, he took formal possession of the immense region watered by the great river and its branches and named it Louisiana, in honor of his master, King Louis XIV. In 1762 France which had been weakened in war, ceded all the land west of the Mississippi to Spain. France eventually regained possession and in 1803 sold this vast territory to the United States for 15 million dollars. Two years later the Territory of Louisiana was formed and it comprised the states of Louisiana, Missouri, Arkansas, Minnesota, Kansas and Iowa.

### WAR IN THE "BEAUTIFUL LAND"

Over a century had passed since Marquette and Joliet had set foot on the virgin soil of Iowa, and as yet not even a trading post had been established. The entire area remained in the undisputed control of the native tribes, who often poured out their life blood in obstinate struggle for supremacy. Our state which is so aptly named "Beautiful Land", was the scene of numerous fierce and bloody struggles between rival Indians for the desired possession of this favored region.

Soon after the formation of the new Louisiana Territory the federal government began to make plans for military posts and trading stations with a view of winning over the warring Indians. Two forces were sent out from Army Headquarters at St. Louis to explore the unknown sources of the Missouri and Mississippi rivers.

#8.50 - P.O. 2422 - 10-8-74 - American Indian Book



The western group was under the command of Lewis and Clark, while Zebulon M. Pike led the group that explored the eastern edge of the state. In 1805 Pike met with several Indian chiefs and picked a Fort site near where the city of Burlington now stands.

## CHIEF BLACKHAWK

In the next decade there occurred a series of bloody Indian wars. Chief Blackhawk was the most important leader of the rebellion and after a long struggle he was finally driven north and later captured and imprisoned. His prison term was short and in a few years and he was released and given a tract of land near Des Moines.

About this time a long series of treaties was made with the Red Men. Then began a wild scramble in eastern Iowa for land. Trappers had come in ahead of the early settlers and many had married into the Indian tribes. This created a three-sided struggle between the Indians, half-breeds and the white men, each trying to outwit the other in the claim for land. To complicate matters there were no authorized surveys or boundary lines. Finally in 1842 some semblance of order came about with the signing of the treaty whereby the Indians gave up their claim to the land west of the Mississippi river.

The Indians that were found in this territory when the early settlers arrived, were the Mesquakies and the white men called their chief Johnny Green.

A small troop of soldiers arrived via steamboat in 1843 at the present site of Des Moines. There were a few trading posts on the Missouri river, but the first real settlement was made at Council Bluffs in 1847 by the Mormons who had been with Brigham Young.

## MORMON TRAIL

The next 10 years saw many of the Mormons migrating west with their few possessions loaded onto a cart that was pulled by hand, usually by a man and two women. The trail crossed the southern part of Guthrie County.

After the Blackhawk purchase there was a steady flow of settlers to Iowa and some provision for civil government became necessary. In 1834 the area of what is now Iowa, Wisconsin and Minnesota was under the jurisdiction of Michigan Territory. Two years later Iowa was made a part of the Wisconsin Territory. At this time there were two counties in the



and the total population was around ten thousand people. 1833 congress set up the Territory of Iowa and President Buren appointed Robert Lucas the first governor.

## **A NEW ERA**

The year 1856 was the beginning of a new era in the history of Iowa as the Rock Island completed their railroad to a City. The last few miles of rails were laid without the benefit of a grade in order to meet the deadline set for the construction date.

Iowa being in the very heart and center of the nation and the route of a great highway across the continent began to attract attention. Cities and towns appeared as if by magic. Foreign money poured into the state and all were in a hurry to get rich with wild speculation ruling the day. Great tracts of land were held by non-residents and this caused some delay in the actual settlement, as the land was priced far above the value of the early pioneers.

## **FIRST SETTLER**

The first settler in Guthrie county was a Mr. John Nevins who came to Jackson Township in 1848. The first permanent residents came here about the period 1850-1860.

## **NATIONAL NEWS**

To gain a better perspective of the problems of our forefathers it would seem appropriate to mention a few of the great national events of the era (1850-60). Worthy of note was the California gold rush in '49 and '50; the railroad was completed from the east to Chicago in 1852; the final Indian treaty was signed in '51; slavery was the big national issue with such incidents as the writing of Uncle Tom's Cabin '56, The Dred Scott decision 1857, the Lincoln-Douglas debates '58, John Brown's raid in '59 and Lincoln's election in 1860. Biggest news in Iowa of the decade was the Spirit Lake massacre in 1864, during which 32 people were killed.

## **HEADING WEST**

Our early settlers migrated in the main from Ohio, Indiana, Illinois. The pattern of settlement was largely determined by the accessibility of wood and water. Civilization crept westward from Des Moines up the 'Coon River and eventually

up such tributaries as Greenbrier creek. The land that we regard as the least valuable was the first to be settled.

Old Guthrie County history shows that there was very much association between our early residents and those pioneers who made their homes on Bays branch and the southwest part of the county. Fifteen miles of a timberless spread of broad sloughs and a multitude of ponds made intimate association nearly impossible.

### **LAWD! DIDN'T IT RAIN?**

There were two record breaking extremes of weather during the period. In 1851 starting May 20th it commenced raining and rained for 40 days and nights without a single intermission of 24 hours.

The winter of 1856-57 was one of the worst on record and took a tremendous toll of lives and livestock.

### **OUR PROUD HERITAGE**

The pioneers were as a rule enterprising, open hearted and sympathetic. They were good neighbors and illustrated the brotherhood of man more by example than by quoting creeds. They were rough and tough but their deficiency in the outward manifestations of piety was more than compensated by their love and regard for humanity. As soon as they had crossed the Mississippi they seemed to have severed previous associations and there was no turning back.

Among the first newcomers here were the Adams family who settled on the west bank of the Raccoon river near State Ford. They were noted for their fine Morgan horses. Some of their land is still owned by their descendants.

### **STATE FORD**

The State Ford crossing was a historic spot in the old days and was named for a settler who had located near the The Des Moines to Sioux City stagecoach road or trail crossing the 'Coon river here and proceeded on north through old Ripon which was up the river several miles.

### **TOWNE COMES TO COUNTRY**

Grandfather A. L. Towne and his young bride located near the Atkinson old mill just north of Dawson in 1857. "Fon", he was more popularly known, worked at his trade in the saw mill for a few years before moving to the old homestead near

naica. Grandad had served an apprenticeship as a ship  
penter in Elyria, Ohio. Because of his ability as a wood-  
worker he was called upon to make many of the early day  
fins for deceased residents of the community. It was the  
tom of the day to measure the departed citizen with a  
low stick both for length, and across the shoulders for the  
lth, and then, the walnut casket was tailored to fit.

These hardy pioneers had fifteen children, six of whom  
d in early childhood. The other six boys and three girls  
ve lived most of their lives in Jamaica or the surrounding  
ritory.

## TYPICAL PIONEERS

The experiences of the Towne family were typical of most  
the early day settlers. Grandpa hitched his team to a light  
gon and drove 50 miles to Des Moines several times a year  
trade. He would load his rig with a few bags of grain,  
ually wheat, and start early in the morning in order to  
nplete the first leg of the trip by sun-down. He would then  
up for the night; arising early in the morning to complete  
trading and start back home by noon and usually arrive  
ne around midnight.

"Uncle" Ed Lee would sometimes go with grandfather on  
se trips and the evening camp was enlivened when "Uncle"  
would manage to arrange a "side holt" wrestling match or  
o, between grandpa and any or all comers. Grandfather was  
ce stopped on the road by a stranger who said he had heard  
these wrestling feats and that he was a pretty good man  
nself and would like to have a go at it. Both men secured  
eir teams and proceded to stage their "match" right there  
the sport.

## EARLY RICHLAND TOWNSHIP

Our township is at the very tip of the last glacier move-  
nt which occurred some 250 thousand years ago. This action  
s the so-called Wisconsin drift and was largely responsible  
the rich deposits of soil in north central Iowa.

At the time of our pioneers the community was described  
a vast meadow, gently rolling, low in some places but with  
v. acres of waste land. There was no timber except along  
e north edge and the township was watered by numerous  
all streams. The tall prairie grass often grew as tall as man,  
t the average height was from 2 to 3 feet. The roots were  
out a foot long and the breaking of the prairie sod was a  
rmidable task indeed.



There was a variety of wild flowers including prairie lilies, black-eyed susans and the prairie rose.

Timber along the 'Coon was mostly cottonwood, walr butternut and the various oaks.

Buffaloes were seldom seen in the state, having migrated westward to the shorter grasses which seemed to be more their liking.

Herds of elk and deer roamed the prairie; wolves were seen in numerous packs, and an occasional wildcat or black bear made hunting an interesting sport to the pioneer. Qu prairie chickens, pheasants, ducks and geese were seen in great numbers. A common complaint of the early settler was that they had no pork or beef to eat; just venison and other game of which they soon tired.

## IOWA MUD

There were few regular roads at the time and the traveler usually followed the lines of least resistance. The traveler while skirting the edge of one of the numerous ponds or swamps found his wagon mired down. Caught in such a fix the pioneer driver would have to carry his load of sacked wheat several rods and reload the wagon after it had been freed from the mud.

## A RUGGED LIFE

The early settler had much to do before he could secure a comfortable living. Although the life was rugged they met their problems head-on and pressed on to their goal.

The very early settlers were here some years before the railroad and their mode of transportation was a plodding team of oxen or horses hitched to the loaded wagon.

There were but few log houses in this community. The first water powered saw mill was in operation near Dawson at an early day and provided serviceable slab lumber which made most of the early one or two room houses were built. As the farm grew more rooms would be added on to the original abode. The floors were usually of rough dressed oak.

There were but few fireplaces; the old kitchen range performing the double duty of warming the home as well as providing cooking facilities. Packing boxes answered as table chairs for the first lean years. Dips made of deer suet, "witches" made of any kind of grease in a tin dish was a substitute for a lamp. Candles were also much in evidence.

## THE LEAN YEARS

Those who brought grain with them fared well for a time, but others suffered as it took two years to break the tough prairie sod to where they could raise a crop of wheat. The wheat crop was of little use as food because of the black smut, and also the nearby mills were not equipped to turn out wheat flour. Corn made into hominy, mush or cornbread provided a good share of the early day diet. Wheat and flax were the money crops; to be sold or traded for needed commodities and to make a payment on the land. Only a few acres of each crop could be raised in the early times owing to the primitive equipment and also the lack of a market.

## OUR FIRST SETTLERS

The first settlers in Richland Township were Josiah Black and his wife, Rachel, who in 1854 entered a claim of 80 acres in Section 1. They improved the place and lived there until Josiah Black's death in 1880. The Blacks were the grandparents of Mrs. Leota Towne and the great grandparents of Violet Levey. This is the farm now occupied by Arthur Glenn and is known for years as the John Walker place.

In 1855 James Measures entered a claim also in the same section. Eleven years later he married a daughter of Josiah Black.

Miles I. Godfrey and his sons, A. H., Miles W., and David lived on Section 2 in 1856.

Other early names included Eli Correy, W. H. Crabb, William Walker, E. E. Butler, Patrick McAllister, W. W. Hall, John King, Jas. Thompson, and Captain Ira Shipley.

Hiram Wisner was the leading figure in the move to organize Richland Township in 1868.

No township records are available before 1872 at which time the trustees were George W. King, W. W. Lair and A. McPatrick with Peter D. Neister as Clerk.

The first death in the township was that of Jacob Heater, son of Jackson and Mary Heater and the father of Tom and John Heater. He died March 8, 1863, and was buried at old cemetery.

The first birth was that of a daughter to George Hamilton in 1856.

The census of 1866 showed the township population to be 356. Two years later showed an increase to 218 and as shown

by the national census 210 were American born and only of foreign birth.

At this time the Northwestern railroad was moving through Greene County and the Des Moines Valley was being completed through Boone. Thus, the market facilities were brought within the reach of the fertile prairies of Richland, and more settlers began to turn toward the township.

Richland Township embraces about 23,000 acres of land. In 1874 only about a third was under cultivation.

The state census of 1885 revealed a total population of 9 persons, of which 116 were foreign born. They included the following: 5 from England, 12 from Ireland, 3 from Scotland, 1 from Canada, 9 from Sweden and, 41 from Germany.

Improved land was assessed at from \$5 to \$8 per acre. For tax deduction for 10 years was given on land planted to timber or fruit orchards.

## THE FIRST ROAD

The first road laid out in the township was the state road between Panora and Boonesboro; the two towns being the county seats of their respective counties. This road entered the township east of the present town of Yale and skirted the north edge of Long Pond and left the township near the southeast corner of section 12. Stagecoaches made a regular run on this route for several years but the coming of the Northwestern R. R. quickly dissolved the need for such transportation. The second road was the Winterset-Jefferson road which was later known as the Panora-Jefferson road and what is now Highway 17.

## THE FIRST POST OFFICE

In 1872 the first Post Office called Advance was established about a mile south of the present town of Herndon. George W. Miller was the postmaster and he was also the proprietor of a small inland store. The mail was carried overland horseback from Panora and Stuart. Ten years later the office was moved to Herndon by Henry Shipley.

Early histories have noted that at this time Herman Miller owned 800 acres in the township of which 300 were under cultivation. His farm home was described as the finest in the county.



## THE IRON HORSE

In 1872 the Des Moines and Northwestern Railroad line, known as the narrow gauge, was planned to run from Des Moines to Sioux City via Adel, Panora and northwest through Adams, Dodge and Highland Townships. A large amount of money was voted in its aid and helped in constructing a grade from Adel to Panora. When the tax was worked out operations ceased and the project was idle until 1878.

Then Hubbell and Polk of Des Moines took over control and the objective point was changed and the line was planned through Richland Township. A year later a 5 per-cent tax was voted locally to aid in the construction and the road was completed to Panora in 1880. The next year it continued on to our township.

In the meanwhile quietly and unheralded the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul R. R. made surveys east and west across the township and pushed plans to complete their road. Builders asked no subsidies and for no aid. The line was completed across the township in 1882.

### HERNDON HASSLE

The final location of the Milwaukee through the township fixed a railroad crossing therein, and that crossing indicated proper site for a town. But the two companies got into a struggle about the location of the crossing on account of the heavy grade on the Milwaukee line at the point where it would be compelled to cross the narrow gauge, if that road would be run on a straight line through the township. So the Milwaukee, by strategy, gained position by putting men to work on its line and completing the western portion first. They were then in a position to dictate to the narrow gauge in the matter of the crossing, compelling it to make an eastwardly bend in its line.

The hassle prevented the union of the two companies on the town site and as a result two different towns were laid out, one by the narrow gauge interests near the crossing at Herndon, and the other by the Milwaukee two miles east at Fairbairn.

This division of interest in building two towns so close together, precluded harmonious efforts to promote the fullest development of either town or surrounding country. The Milwaukee refused to furnish any depot accommodations to Herndon until forced to do so in 1884 by a law passed by the General Assembly of that year.

## A TOWN IS BORN

In January of 1882 the Milwaukee land company purchased 40 or more acres from John S. Ellis and proceeded to lay a town.

The line of title of this land is as follows: Original entry was made in the federal government land office in Washington, D. C. on August 11, 1855, transferring what is now the Town of Jamaica and other lands in the vicinity to George W. Tallman. As Mr. Tallman is not remembered by any of the older residents and the fact that his name appears on many title abstracts of farm land in this community, it is presumed that he was either a land speculator or a government agent of some sort. On June 15, 1856, a land patent was issued to Mr. Tallman by the general land office of Washington, D. C. This patent was in effect a deed from the federal government.

Mr. John S. Ellis bought 80 acres on a contract for \$400 on December 21, 1868. Three of his great-grandsons still reside here; namely Bernard, Leo and Donald Ellis. The Milwaukee land company purchased the present town site from Mr. Ellis for \$3200.

A survey was made by their engineers and the town plat was filed February 21, 1882, just 15 days after the filing of the plat of Herndon.

## SEDALIA

At first the town was called Sedalia, but was finally officially named Van Nest. But there being another town in that name in the state the name was soon changed to the more agreeable title, Jamaica.

During World War I a resolution was introduced in the Iowa legislature to change the name to Holdagel in honor of one of its members, but the suggestion was never carried out.

## WIGGLEVILLE

The first addition to the new town was the Hulbert addition and was promptly dubbed Wiggleville. Some say the street was so named because the residents were mostly day laborers and had to "wiggle like hell to get through the winter." Others claim the name came from the fact that the swamp area to the north was filled with wigglers or tadpoles.

The Adams 1st and 2nd additions were opened by J. W. Adams soon after or about 1891.



### **FIRST BUILDING IN JAMAICA**

**Eric Lilja Blacksmith Shop**

**to R Mrs. Lilja, Eric Lilja, Wm. Ross, J. D. Cherryholmes**

### **OUR FIRST CITIZEN**

The first building in Jamaica was the blacksmith shop of Eric Lilja. It was moved here from his former location near the River. He also built the first house in town and continued to make his home here until his death in 1935. Few in our community have enjoyed the respect that Eric commanded for his workmanship, honesty and zeal.

The first store building was erected by John J. Quiggans, native of the Isle of Man, in February, 1882. In this Mr. Quiggans opened the pioneer store of Jamaica and carried a stock of general merchandise.

### **SMITH PARMENTER**

A second store was started soon after by Smith Parmenter. He came here from Perry and became one of the most legendary outstanding citizens of the early days. He operated his general store for about a year and then became the town's first postmaster while operating an insurance and collection agency on the side. In later years he went back into the store business with Harlow Towne and also with Albert Weidman.



Other businesses which started in the first year were: Po and Riddle, hardware; W. F. DeLong, restaurant; W. C. McGroceries, flour and feed; D. G. Rummell, harness maker; White, drugs; Frederick Leber, shoes; A. G. Edmond, livery yard, and Barney Ellis, hotel.

The first baby born in the village was Henry Riddle, a son of Allen and Enolia Riddle. His birth was recorded on October 16, 1882.

The first deaths were those of Thomas and David Benjamin infant brothers who died May 14, 1883.

Mr. B. O. (Ben) Witter came to Jamaica in '83 and was associate in a blacksmith and wagon shop. A year later he bought out his partners and moved the building across the tracks and converted it into a feed mill.

### **WESLEY ADAMS**

J. W. (Wesley) Adams erected a frame building on the corner now occupied by the telephone company. He started out with a furniture stock but soon disposed of this to D. Smith and converted his place to a general merchandise store. The top floor was occupied for many years by the Masonic lodge.

Mrs. Adams put in a dress shop in the same building and continued in that business for seven years, finally selling it to her daughters, Anna and Ella Huffman.

Richard Black started the first meat market here and operated for about a year. Dr. Estee was here about the same period. The same fall Gib Rowley embarked in the general store business which he ran until 1892.

### **DENNIS SMITH**

Not much improving was done until 1886 when D. S. Smith and John Coleman started a meat market. This business was discontinued after a few months and Mr. Smith put in a grocery stock. Two years later he disposed of his inventory and bought the drug store of Ira White, in which business he remained until 1893. He then started a broom factory which was burned out in the fire of 1894. He was not easily discouraged, however, and he started a furniture and hardware business in his building on the corner now occupied by William C. McNeill. He continued in this business until he left Jamaica some years later.

## PETE SHANNON

E. S. (Pete) Shannon purchased the afore mentioned drug store of Mr. Smith and continued the operation until his death in 1917, after which his wife, Delia and her brother, Johnny, carried on until the twenties. "Pete" was an avid sportsman. He was not only a talented performer on the baseball diamond at several positions but highly regarded for his pitching ability as well. He also owned and drove several racing horses which he took great pride in racing on nearby tracks.

In 1886 Ross and McClatchey started a tile works on the west side of town. The clay there proved unsatisfactory and the factory was moved to the Correy farm east of town. A short time later McClatchey was killed by a land slide. While digging clay he had paused to rest for a moment and was impaled on a pick handle by the sudden movement of dirt from above. Chas. Scheib bought the business and sold it in 1899 to A. C. Zartman.

A hotel was started by J. J. Heater in 1887 in the building that was later occupied by Hills hardware.

Jas. (Jim) Thompson was in and out of the hardware business several times during this period and in 1895 his brother Al took over and continued the business for some time.



Jamaica about 1890

## A BAD YEAR

The twenty years from 1890 on was when Jamaica made its most rapid growth, although 1894 was perhaps the most critical year in local history. It was very dry that season and crops were short. Ponds were dry and 'Coon River stopped running.

To make matters worse, the grasshoppers moved in to take what little crop was left. In reply to grandmother's question concerning these hoppers, grandfather said, "the big ones cutting the grain down and the little ones are bucking it and carrying it away."

The town suffered its most disastrous single loss when fire destroyed the west business block. It was, however, rebuilt in the next few years.

## GOOD TIMES COME AGAIN

At the turn of the century an enterprising young printer, Walter E. Goreham published a booklet on Jamaica. From this report we gather that local business must have been at an all time high at this time.

There were three general stores; Parmenter and Weidman, E. L. Towne and J. W. Adams; also, J. W. Murphy, grocer; A. G. Edmond, grain; W. J. Thompson, D. S. Smith and Joe F. hardware; D. U. Parks, implements; George W. Heater, C. Miller and L. A. Adams, real estate; Olive and Shannon and R. Lundy, drugs; T. C. Lundy, bank; Mrs. Eli Correy and A. Allen, hotel; Chadsey cheese factory; W. D. Simons and A. Zartman, brick and tile; A. E. Thorpe, harness; J. W. Kinn, insurance; George Hohanshelt, barber; H. J. Hohanshelt, jeweler; Erick Lilja and S. R. Emms, blacksmiths; Fred Leber, shoemaker; L. W. Goreham, meats; and E. M. Godfrey and J. M. Thornbury, livery barns.

The "good times" of the era were helped along by the substantial number of jobs available to local laborers. The farmers were retiring with a nice profit made by the natural increases in the land values.

"Joining up" was a popular trend of the day with the following groups active before the turn of the century; Knights Pythias, Modern Woodmen, Odd Fellows, Rebeccas, G.A.R. and their auxiliary, the W.R.C. These societies have long since passed into oblivion.



## **ORGANIZATION**

The town was incorporated in 1901, largely through the efforts of Walter E. Goreham. He was appointed the first town clerk by Mayor George B. Smith. First council members were Eli Correy, Al Edmands, E. S. Shannon, G. E. Lamp, A. C. Stuman and M. Sitterly.

The new regime swung right into action. Their first act was to order the building of a "calaboose" or lock-up.

The second was to order a new plank street crossing.

The third move was to have a general clean-up of all alleys and back-yards of manure piles and rubbish. (Nearly every one had a family cow and a horse.) Also hog pens were ordered floored and kept clean during hot weather.

George Hohanshelt was named marshal at a salary of \$10 month.

The same year Ellis' second addition was platted. Barber shops were ordered to close on Sundays.

## **ED GARRITY**

J. Edward Garrity bought into the drug store business in 1901 and continued the same until his retirement in 1950. He was post master for a good many years.

## **ANGEL IN A BUFFALO COAT**

The year 1902 is to be remembered by the arrival of Dr. William A. Seidler, Sr. The community was fortunate indeed to have available the able services of this fine gentleman. His colleagues had high respect for his ability as a diagnostician. He delivered over two thousand babies during his tenure here. He was a familiar figure in his buffalo coat as he braved biting winds of winter to allay the suffering of the afflicted. He served the community for 50 years.

T. M. Aylsworth started a general store the same year and continued until his death in 1940. T. M. as he was called, carried a line of fine dinner ware and featured a tremendous variety of bulk candies.

Also, in 1902 George Heater took over the Citizens Bank which he and his sons operated until 1921 when they consolidated with the Jamaica Savings Bank.

## THE BIG STORE

The "big" store as it was locally known was built around the turn of the century and was half a block long. The front room is now occupied by Don's Tavern. This store carried the largest general stock in town. It was operated in turn by the following: Parmenter & Weidman, Parmenter & H. A. Toy, Thompson & Simpson, Thompson & Walker, and lastly by H. Westbrook. Such commodities as soap, salt, apples and potatoes were handled by the carload. Eggs, butter and cream were bought locally or "traded out" and shipped to the city market by rail.

## WARREN LAIR

W. E. Lair also came to Jamaica in 1902 and was a partner of Hugh McDevitt in the livery business. He later operated a cafe a short time after which he started buying produce and expanded in later years to the feed and milling business. Warren held various town positions for nearly twenty-five years as well as other community officers.

On April 2, 1902, Ensign Lodge No. 585 A.F.A.M. was organized with C. W. Lundy, W. M., D. S. Smith, secy. and J. Ellis, treasurer. The companion lodge, Jamaica Chapter O.E. was started in 1906 with Annie Aylsworth as Matron and W. Seidler, Patron.

## SIX YEAR FEUD

During these six years the city dads were having their difficulties. They had been trying to force the railroad to open a crossing to south main street. The Milwaukee took a dim view of the project as it would cause them inconvenience to "break" their freight trains for traffic. The town finally hired "Judge" Fahey a well known lawyer of that time to present them and finally a settlement was effected.

## CURFEW

They seemed to have had a youth problem in those days too, as a 9 o'clock curfew law was passed, also an ordinance against fast driving (by horse, of course.)

With typical Yankee ingenuity they tactfully straddled the Sunday beer problem by levying a \$5.00 per month fine on a certain cafe owner.

Among the monthly bills was one to young Doctor Seidler who was paid \$5 for 5 calls on a scarlet fever case.

## **HIRAM AND GEORGE**

Hiram Hohanshelt was the proud possessor of the first auto "Hi" and his brother, George, were in business here for forty years. "Hi" was a watch repairman and at one time a jewelry business as a side line. He was a devotee of old music and his bachelor quarters were the scene of many old time "Jam" session. "Hi" was equally adept at chord- on the old organ or sawing out the beat on the big bass e.

Brother George bought father's barber business in the 90's. Included in the contract was a payment of fifty rs if father would not go back into the business for five s.

## **.SELF STARTER**

George owned the first so called "self starter" in Jamaica. nsisted of a cast iron pulley about a foot in diameter that mounted on the front of his 1914 Ford. A small rope ran hgh a series of smaller pulleys to the drivers seat. The ator would give the customary two crankings with the e out and "glory be," once in a while the third jerk would the motor. Later the battery driven starting motor was ected and the common tragedy of breaking your arm trying ank your car was a thing of the past.

George and his good friend "Nig" Heater were constantly ged in pulling tricks on each other. Their "feud" caused erous chuckles along main street.

## **HELLO CENTRAL**

n 1903 the Mutual Telephone Company was organized with ge W. King, president, and Jim Thompson, secretary. ge" Rummell was hired as operator for \$200 per year. The rd" was located in the rear of the hardware store and could only be made in the daytime.

The year 1906 was one of much improving. Streets were eled at a cost of \$2.50 per day for a man and team and \$1.50 shovelers. The gravel was secured from the pasture north own. The local Telephone Company had grown and they e now ordered to move their lines to the alleys. Smith & er put in a good many cement sidewalks which were quite mprovement over the old plank ones. Also, two gasoline et lamps were installed on the main block and Hi Hohan- t was hired for twenty-five cents a night to care for them.

Several careless citizens were warned to clean up their y hog pens.



## JAMAICA'S CORNET BAND EARLY 1900's



**C. Ed. Trombley, director**

**Bon Crinnegan, drum major**

Near this time C. E. Trombley became publisher of Jamaica Journal. He was also an able cornetist and directed a fine uniformed brass band of that day. The band had an elevated stand for concert use. It was later directed by B. Emms of Perry.

Street carnivals and merchants booster days were held at irregular intervals. Baseball was the high spot in entertainment. Sunday games were frowned upon by some, so Mr. Parmenter solved that problem by declaring a week day holiday on the afternoon of the game and the town would be locked tight.

### MAKE THE EAGLE SCREAM

Independence Day was often formally celebrated and colorful posters gave notice of the event by proclaiming "MAKE THE EAGLE SCREAM" in Jamaica July 4th.

Opening the "day" was the colorful calithumpian or rag-fife parade. Then to the city park where, after a suitable patriotic medley by the band, prim little girls in white dresses would rattle through their "pieces" and perhaps burst out with song or two. Then some state politico would court support for the coming election with a fervent flag-waving address.

Several of the "Boys in Blue" would close the program with selections on the fifes and drums.

At noon families would share their sumptuous picnic baskets.

There was the thrill of riding the gallant steeds on the steam driven merry-go-round or sharing the screams of the girls who were brave enough to ride the "lover's tub." Then too, were the comical hat-bands, such as "I love my wife—tough you kid," "23 skidoo," and many other nonsensical sayings.

The afternoon would be filled with street racing for all ages. After the big baseball game the men folk would hustle home and do the chores. Then as soon as darkness came "Judge" Rummell and his crew would "set off" a display of giant sky rockets and Roman candles.

Devotees of the light fantastic would finish out the day square dancing at Steve Young's great hall where as many as twenty sets could be run at one time. With a little encouragement from the crowd, "Paddy" Tighe would gladly give an impromptu performance of Irish jigs.

## DISASTROUS FIRE



### FIRE — 1909

**DUNN HARDWARE — TROMBLEY PRINT SHOP  
CRINNEGAN - HARNESS — JOE WILCOX - LIVERY**

In 1909 fire destroyed the northwest block consisting of Dunn's Hardware, The Journal Press, the harness shop, a car and a livery barn. As a result an ordinance was passed controlling the construction of new buildings in the business district. This was more or less disregarded in later years and it became a greater problem to encourage new building.

A peddlers' license of \$5.00 per day was ordered but never seriously enforced.

Citizens were also complaining to the city fathers about kids riding bikes and coaster wagons on the sidewalks.

Among the business men of this time were Bon Crinnegan, harness; T. A. Dunn, hardware; A. R. Cotton, carpenter; F. McClatchey, garage; William Ross, garage; Phil Lawton, hardware; F. E. Butler, pool hall; S. Z. Hulbert, pool hall; C. Morris, meats; Robinson & Burk, lumber; O. W. Correy, hotel; B. D. Estey, printer; Bob Tighe, pool hall, and John Hohenschelt, garage, and Andrew E. McKeon, banker.





### **Main Street Looking South — About 1912**

In 1911 council members, Bon Crinnegan, E. L. Towne, Firebaugh, Pat McDermott, and Jack Taylor, had a ley made and plans drawn for a city water system. After h opposition it was brought to a vote in 1915. The first was a tie at 83 all. A few weeks later the measure was ated 103-55. Personal prejudices were in a large part possible for the defeat.

In October of 1912 plans were made to erect the present n hall. Two new jail cages were added at a cost of \$150.

At this time the Milwaukee was engaged in putting in the ble track. It was a sizeable project as the earth moving pment was powered by horses and mules. Jesse Murphy the Milwaukee agent at this time and for some years later.

In 1915 Ted Adams was given the contract at \$1.50 a rod ay 150 rods of large tile to contain the open drainage ditch flowed through the south end of town.

### **LET THERE BE LIGHT**

A year later the Iowa Electric Company was awarded a ting franchise. Frank Schlicter, local garage owner, had n paid fifty cents per month to furnish current for two et lights, during the early evening hours, from his Delco em.



**Milwaukee Depot — Elevator — Ice House — About 1909-**



**Jamaica Main Street Looking North — Taken About 1915?**

## THE TIDE TURNS

The turning point in small town history can be pin-pointed most exactly to the time of World War I (1917-1918). Prices y-rocketed over night and fell a year later at an even faster e. These years signalled the end of most small town general res. Many merchants were unable to withstand the terrific mp in prices. Customers who had paid cash for potatoes eight dollars per bushel during the war, were now asking credit on the same commodity at twenty-five cents per shel. Many local land owners were also hit hard by pyramid- g land prices and the inevitable crash saw many family life- ne savings dissipated in a few months.

During World War I tempers flared high against those of rman extraction. The label of slacker of I. W. W. was the ghest insult that could be applied to a citizen of that day and, you may well imagine, was often used by those of quick nper and small compassion.

## A DIRTY TRICK

Banks were perhaps too free to loan money and were somewhat unjustly blamed when they tried to collect. One local "boker" gave vent to his spleen by slipping up town in the rkness of night with a bucket of fresh cow manure and thenattering a rainbow of the stinking offal across the front of e bank window.

## THAT OLD DEBBIL FLU

The flu epidemic caused several deaths in the community. Many of the younger school children "fought off" the illness wearing an asofoedity bag around the neck and were almost nstantly conditioned by drinking sienna tea and a potion ewed from sassafras bark.

The town was host to many of the boys from Camp Dodge and the local Red Cross was well organized. Most of the ladies are time was occupied by rolling bandages, making pajamas and knitting sweaters for the "boys." The small fry scoured e country for old bones which were presumed to provide aterial for the filters in gas masks. Junk metal of all kinds is in demand also. The commercial club erected the large g pole on main street and a huge flag was flown daily to form the world that Jamaica was 100% behind our "boys" er there.



## ARMISTICE DAY

There were several false alarms regarding the Armistice. Finally Jesse Murphy got the authentic word over the wire from the depot. This was greeted with mixed emotions. The men thoughtfully gathered at the church for prayer. Impromptu bands of noisemakers appeared on the street. Old "Doc" Steward resurrected his 8 gauge shotgun that had been fired for years and boomed out in celebration.

Charley Nicholson, the local shoemaker, who was well known for his artistic ability was hastily commissioned to make an effigy of the Kaiser. That happy evening the dummy was hung from a pole and later burned in the huge bonfire in the middle of main street.

Later an impromptu program followed featuring ragtime piano playing by "Nig" Heater and "Icky" and "Bally" Ester. A hilarious rendition of "Josephus and Bohunkus."

Then came the "piece de resistance;" the tremendous luck supper. The huge table groaned beneath the almost endless variety of vittles;—a day to be remembered.

## DOUBLE TRAGEDY.

The community was saddened July 4, 1919, when Clarence Kinney and his son, Guy, were drowned in the high water on the 'Coon River near the old saw mill place.

The local garage was destroyed by a spectacular blast about this same time. The banker's son thought his Model was leaking gas and he crawled underneath and lit a match to see if it was. The resulting explosion destroyed the building and several cars stored there.

Business places of this era included John Clopton, hotel; Myrtle Stotts, hotel; George W. Heater, banker; Don Atkins, banker; Delia Shannon, drugs; J. E. Garrity, drugs; William A. Seidler, Sr., W. E. Lair, produce; Eric Lilja, Smith; Cherryholmes Brothers, hardware; Charles Ellis, plumber; F. A. Schlichter, garage; William Ross, garage; E. L. Tow, general merchandise; T. M. Aylsworth, general merchandise; George Hohanshelt, barber; Hiram Hohanshelt, jeweler; Charles Nicholson, shoes; Lloyd Nicholson, barber; T. A. Du, garage; S. Z. Hulbert, pool hall; Louis Shellman, meat; Joe Hokel, meats; E. C. Robinson, cafe; Walter Hardwood, lumber; G. E. Lamp, elevator, and B. D. Estey, printer.

## **TRAFFIC VICTIM**

In March 1921 Mahlon M. "Nig" Heater became Jamaica's traffic victim when his car overturned just west of town. He was vice president of his father's bank and had formerly the position of postmaster. He was well known throughout rural Iowa for his talent as a ragtime piano player.

## **EVANS FAMILY**

In the fall of 1922 a successful municipal band was organized largely through the efforts of Mel Evans who was the manager of the local lumber yard. All four members of the Evans family were members of the group. The band had some other members and was ably directed by Charles W. Bushman. Garrity, D. R. Poole, W. E. Lair and Blaine Heater took part in this band as well as with the group that had played earlier in Jamaica.

## **DADDY OF ALL CARNIVALS**

In 1923 the first of a series of street carnivals was given to raise funds for the band. Active promotion of these affairs was handled by C. C. Armstrong, Ross Woltz and the author of this booklet. A large midway was featured. There were many carnival rides, the usual freak and girlie shows and sessions of every variety—all out to get the country boys and girls. As one old resident so aptly put it, "Dere iss schemers town." Guest bands and circus acts provided free entertainment. Col. Smith W. Brookhart, a controversial Iowa senator, spoke at the carnival. The last old time balloon ascension in this area was presented here in the late twenties.

In February of 1922 the council ordered a two weeks city agency quarantine because of the diphtheria epidemic. School was dismissed and lodges, churches and all other public meetings were banned.

Business men of the 20's included besides the older merchants the names of Scott Walker, meats; Claire A. Heater, bank; and and Towne, grain; Loyal Towne, bank; Leslie Thompson, John Carnes, bank, and H. F. Wilson, harness and hardware.

## **EASY MONEY**

These were the odd-ball years; Farm mortgages were being foreclosed, Iowa's golden corn crop was used for fuel a year ago, and the country was over-run by glib tongued promoters

after an easy buck. So called blue-sky promotions seemed order of the day. One promoter had the temerity to open a stock in a building to store zinc and lead ore and then try to capitalize on the high market that was "just around the corner." Agents for the fabulous "Drake Estate" found some favorable local

### **A LOCAL GOLDMINE**

Several local farmers were perhaps unjustly accused of "salting their goldmine" which in this case was done by slipping out during the night and adding more water to what was already a near impassible mudhole. Then the hapless motorist would get bogged down and have to call for help. Once in a while a bonus of a gallon of "Templeton Rye" could be gained if the victim was one of those mysterious fellows who usually drove a huge black touring car loaded with brew for the eastern market.

### **K. K. K.**

Shrewd promoters even organized the Klu Klux Klan locally. Older members were sincere in their intentions but some of the younger fellows joined more for a lark and caused much comment both in and out of the organization by surreptitiously lighting crosses in and about town. The movement died as soon as the promoters moved to greener fields.

### **DEPRESSION DAYS**

Coincidental with the great national depression were dark days of the early '30s.

### **ROASTING PIGS IN CHINA?**

Our little village reeled under a series of devastating floods. Included in the casualty list was the Methodist church, a garage, lumber yard, oil station, bank and also the double frame building housing the harness shop and hardware.

Jobs when available provided pay for little more than bare necessities of life. In 1932 the total town budget was only \$1597. Some typical food prices of the time were beef steak 15c a lb., ground beef 3 lbs. for 10c, cheese 15c and bread 3 loaves for 25c. New cars sold for \$600 on up.

### **A NEW TOY**

The pride and joy of the town council was the purchase of a used Marmon car which they converted into a fire truck.

ly installed a water pump on it and hung the ladders on sides and added a hitch to pull the faithful old chemical kts. Many a chuckle was provided when the older gentry gled with the younger firemen over the speed and operation he machine. But as Lloyd Nicholson, who was the main et wit once observed, "They saved a good many foundations."

## **A SAD YEAR**

The village was saddened in the early 30's by the deaths of the Heater family within a years time. The father, rge W. Heater, was one of our pioneer business men. He the son of one of the very early pioneers. He had been aged in various enterprises such as farming, threshing hine operator, real estate, insurance and in the bank.

His son, Blaine M. was the next to be called. The Journal ribed him as "the man who never had an enemy."

Claire A. died in the fall of '32. He was town clerk for y years and had many other interests in community dev- ment besides his duties in the bank.

Other well known main street figures passed on about this e time and included Charles Ellis, (1927); D. G. Rummell 30); E. L. Towne (1933); Doc Steward (1932); John Wesley ms (1925); Jess Murphy (1937); Jas Welch (1931); T. A n (1927) and John Ryan (1928).

## **W. P. A. DAYS**

In 1934 the council appropriated several hundred dollars be used in the construction of several large cisterns by the P. A. This made a little work for local labor and provided ttle more fire protection. Mayor Woltz proposed that the n park be rejuvenated but the council were skeptical about ing any changes of such a hallowed spot. As a result the k today is but shadow of its former beauty.

In 1936 saw times still in the recovery stage. Unemployed sients were still numerous and the city fathers voted to w a 15c meal ticket to each "knight of the road."

## **TIME FOR A CHANGE**

In December the same year the younger business men and abers of the council started to investigate the possibilities securing a water system for the town. A year later an neer was hired to draw the preliminary plans.



The project was brought to vote and carried 101 to 1. Some of the older citizens still insisted that only a few farms would use the water.

Work was finally started in 1939 and the plant was completed a year later.

Much of the labor was furnished as a W.P.A. project. Mayor Glen Clark spent many hours supervising the work and deserves much credit for the success of the plant. In the years additional wells have been drilled and a filter system added.

### ON THE MEND

In 1939 the official wage scale for town work was 25c an hour for a man and 50c for a man and team. Things were however picking up and the town started to gain a higher degree of prosperity.

Business men of the 40's included Lloyd Nicholson, tavern; Dan Walker, tavern; Clark and Son, grain; Merle Smith, groceries; Merle Summers, hardware; Lester Nicholson, cafe; I. Simmer, telephone office; Bernard Ellis, service station; Bruce F. Towne, groceries.

### V. J. DAY

The end of World War II or V.J. Day was much more mildly celebrated here than the first Armistice Day. The public display was an impromptu three piece band that marched from the school on down main street. The enthusiastic members were Superintendent Thomas J. Miller on trombone, Pittman, snare drum and Clifford "Dad" Patrick, bass drum.

Paul Johnson Post of the American Legion was organized here in 1946 with Edward McDermott as Commander. The ladies Auxiliary was headed by Mrs. Lee Hunt.

Much that has taken place in recent years will be covered in other chapters so we will not duplicate it here.

Jamaica was the only town in the county to show an increase in the period 1940 to 1950.

### END OF AN ERA

In 1956 an era came to an end with the razing of the waukeez depot. Loss of carload livestock and grain shipping was largely responsible for the change.

The year 1958 finds the following business firms and their  
th of service to the community — Les Overman, barber (6),  
food store (4); Robert Kelly, produce (22); Loys Lumley,  
hardware and machinery (13); McNeill Brothers, trucking ser-  
(16); Raymond Thomas, trucking (15); William C. McNeill,  
hine shop (22); Donald Ellis, grain company manager (12);  
rett Severns, lumber yard manager (23); LaVerne DeVitt,  
ers (8); Violet Finley, cafe (3); Donald D. Radebaugh, tav-  
(12); Bruce F. Towne, food store (25); Wendell D. Jones,  
k manager and insurance (34); Elbert Adams, repair shop  
Marie Ward, beauty shop (6); Dr. William A. Seidler, Jr.,  
D. (13); Roy Pittman, telephone manager (5); J. L. McDevitt,  
master (10), and Ernest Blezek, plumber (9).

# SCHOOLS

Most noteworthy of the early day schools in the vicinity was old "Bunker Hill" school east of town. Students came from the farm homes in a roughly drawn two mile radius. The school year was divided into three terms; fall, winter and spring. The younger children went all three terms, while the older students usually made it only during the slack work season of winter. Grades were of a somewhat elastic nature, and a student "taking up" in the text book at the place where he had stopped the year before.

'Readin', 'ritin and 'rithmetic taught to the tune of a hickory stick' as the old jingle goes was the usual order of the day. Spelling bees and ciphering matches were enthusiastically entered into by the early day students.

The old school was often the center of community activity at night with perhaps a sermon by a circuit rider, an occasional box social or a community sing.

Lunch pails were packed with corn bread and molar sandwiches and perhaps a hunk of pork or beef and an apple. Water was supplied from the shallow school well upon which a pump hung the inevitable tin dipper. A minor tragedy of the times occurred when a thoughtless youngster tried to drink from the dipper during the winter season and then found the utensil had frozen to his lips.

The first school in the vicinity was taught by David Fawcett in 1857. The first schoolhouse was built in 1866. Ten years after the district was organized, and the board members were Alf Godfrey, W. W. Hale and E. B. Doty, with John Mitchell, secretary.

The first township school was built on the place now occupied by Frank Sanford. Soon after the Town of James was established and a two story frame building was erected in the present school grounds. This half block of land was given to the town for this purpose and the adjoining half was donated as a park by the Milwaukee Land Co.

This building was replaced in 1899 by what was then described as a "beautiful", new, modern four room brick structure erected at a cost of nearly \$4000.



### **HIGH SCHOOL, JAMAICA, IOWA 1899**

The local paper in 1895 carried this item: "The principal of the Jamaica Public School was arrested for using the 'willow' on some of the big boys a few days ago, but in justice court the professor was exonerated and the school moves on lightly. A parent, however, withdrew their children, and will now let them finish their street education, we presume, where they graduate with usual honors at a much earlier age. It was ever thus."





### **PROF. EMMET KINNEY**

Professor Emmet C. Kinney whose name has become legend in local circles because of his direct method of handling discipline problems became superintendent and held the position for many years.

His sister, Loetta "Aunt Loa" taught the upper grades for a long period some years later.

Miss Amy Slawson was also an instructor here for a number of many years.

Until 1922 the school went only to the 10th grade. Those wishing to continue their education usually did so at the county high school at Panora. Richland township had a group of ten students and any in excess of that number were charged \$2.25 a month tuition. In 1907 board and room in Panora was offered for \$2.50 a week with laundry 25c extra.

### **A STEP FORWARD**

The local community was in a merging mood around 1900. The local protestant churches had just joined forces and school consolidation was starting its swing over the state. The u

finally accomplished but not without some dissension as some of the old timers were loath to give up their local township schools to which so many happy memories and heritages were attached.

The first 12 year graduation was in 1921 with Ben and Leo Hermott the graduates. F. M. Mounts was the first superintendent of the new era and he was a man dedicated to the cause of education.

## DUTCH BOY SAVES SCHOOL

In 1932 there were still rumblings of discontent from a few of the die-hards.

At the graduation that spring "Mounts" was the central figure in a very dramatic scene, when he stood on the platform to deliver the graduation speech. He called a young first grader to his side and cried, "you all know this youngster and how he is being raised by a widowed mother." "Some of you might destroy our school and deny this boy an education." At this point Mounts pulled out his pocketknife and opened the blades. Raising the knife, he cried, "if this came to pass it would be no meaner than if I took this weapon and gouged out your eyes."

Most of the audience were in tears as the services came to a close. But the school was saved as the snipers had not the fortitude to answer this challenge.

During the first years of the consolidation three country school buildings were moved in to augment the facilities. The Christian Church was used for plays and programs. Basketball was played on an outdoor court.

The busses were of the horse drawn variety for several years. Bob McPherson and Azel Patrick were among the drivers of that era. Trucks were not in general use and it is doubtful if they could have made the trip over some of the roads of the day. Tom Dunn, the local garage owner, made up a home made bus that saw some use and finally the bus bodies were all transferred to truck chassis.

The school progressed and in 1925 plans were made for a \$50,000 building. This proposal was defeated but later a \$5,000 bond issue was approved and as a result the present school building was constructed.

## ANOTHER STEP FORWARD

But school boosters were never quite satisfied with facilities and in 1953 a new \$160,000 addition was built. It added five new class rooms and provided the largest gym in the county.

Adequate parking space, dressing rooms and lunch facilities have made our new gym a popular place for basketball tournaments and music festivals. Much credit must be given Superintendent Russell E. Stern for his efficiency in handling these affairs and to the local fans who have so graciously assisted.

School patrons and friends in the community have a very keen interest in the progress of our school.

An outstanding example was at the graduation ceremony when board president Leo Ellis presented diplomas to his daughter, Jacqueline, who was a member of the class and his wife, Louise, who completed her final year by correspondence work.

As these words are being written it appears that our graduation with near-by communities will be effected in the future. And though we shed a tear for the proud memory of old Jamaica High, we hope that the new step will bring greater opportunities for our youngsters.

# BRUSH WITH HISTORY

Several of our former citizens had a close contact with the great historical events.

Grandfather Towne was among those taking part in the California Gold Rush. He traveled the rugged and adventurous west in the early fifties. He was modestly successful in quest as he returned to his Ohio home a few years later with several thousand dollars worth of "dust" in his poke.

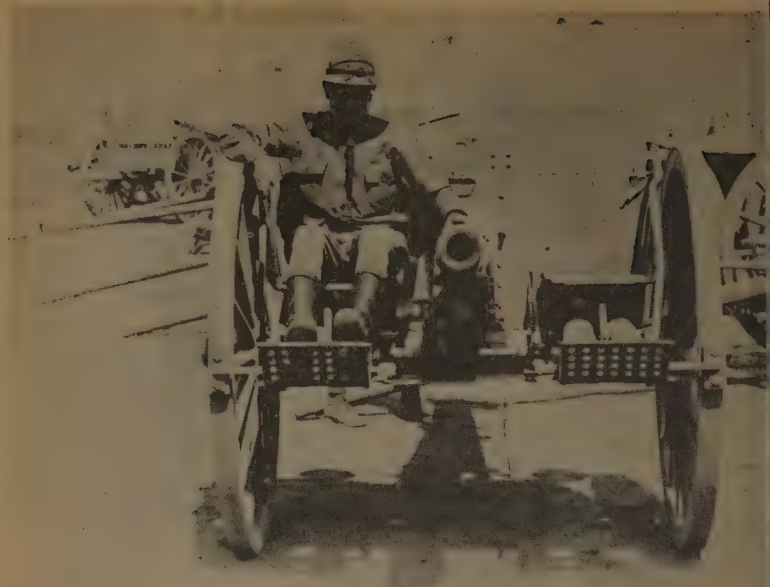
D. G. "Judge" Rummell, who died in 1930 at nearly 90 years of age, was in an Ohio regiment during the civil war. He was in ten battles before he was captured by the rebels. He survived the rigour of eight months in a confederate prison. It is incongruous that this mild mannered little man could endure through such an ordeal.

Perhaps the answer is to be found in his obituary. "It is fitting that, while in his strength, that the church bell would never ring but that "Judge" Rummell would be there. In addition to his loyalty as a layman, when the occasion demanded, Judge Rummell filled the pulpit that the work of His Master must go on."

Perhaps the most colorful of all was J. P. "Jack" Taylor. He came to Missouri from England at the age of eight. At an early age he became a scout, joining the pioneers in opening the great west for settlement. For a time he was a rider with the Pony Express, and shared the dangers of this hazardous occupation. During his service as a scout he became personally acquainted with Buffalo Bill, Wild Bill Hickok, Frank and Jesse James, General George Custer, Bat Masterson and many others who occupied the stage at different times during the opening of the west."

Jack loved to recall his experience for us youngsters. His favorite tale concerned his attendance at the ceremony of the laying of "the golden spike," which signalled the completion of the railroad from coast to coast. His punch line was, "a good chineeman drove the spike."





Sgt. Thomas Towne, 6th F.A. 1st Division fired the 2nd shot in World War I. The event took place during the American offensive at Cantigny, France, on May 28, 1918.

Clint "Boogem" Knee was sheriff of Dallas County at a time when authorities there engaged in a gun battle at a field park with members of the notorious Barrow gang.

Others of the community have been in the limelight to a lesser degree, and of course any of our boys in the service during World War II were present at different historical battles

# POLITICS

The local vote of the early years was swung to the support of the Republican Party. As Uncle Billy Walker put it, "By Henny, seven dom gud republican votes if the dom devils only vote." Politics was the favorite topic when friends and neighbors met in the old general store. Enthusiastic voters often set off huge bonfires on main street to celebrate success at the polls.

Typical of the early day orations was a nearby politico's usual line—"The lightning may flash and the thunder roll, Hooper Morain will stand firm, By God Sir!"

In '73 the vote was 73-0 in favor of Panora for the county. In '82 prohibition carried 65-49.

The depression of the 30's was responsible for a change in political views and both F. D. R. and Truman received considerable support here.

Among those who gained success in the political field are Ed Thompson who is now a member of the Iowa Supreme Court.

Clint Knee started as town marshal here in 1912, then became Dallas County sheriff and later Chief of the Iowa Highway Patrol.

Mrs. John W. Crabb served two terms as state representative and is now chairman of the Iowa Conservation Commission.

# HORSES

The place of the horse in local history was a large one. late as 1917 the tax list showed 36 horses in town .

The first hitching racks were down the sides of main st but as the hamlet grew they were removed to the side str to prevent embarrassment to the local belles. As the la promenaded down the walk in their full skirted gowns were often spattered by fly bitten nags stomping in the puc of water and offal that gathered near the curb.

Another early day social complaint was lodged by the la of the town about the breeding of mares within the city li

The livry barns and the draying business supported sev families.



**HOT RODS 1914 STYLE**

**L to R Garland, Thompson, O'Connell, Nicholson, O'Connell and Murphy.**

In 1899 ninety-three carloads of freight were shipped into town and 278 were billed out. Incoming freight included 5 loads of flour, 1 hard coal, 15 sand, 5 stone, 4 salt, 46 lumber, 5 lime, 5 brick and 7 of farm implements. Billed out were 192 loads of grain, 38 cattle and hogs, 2 coal, 1 iron and 52 brick and lime. Besides this an average of 3,000 lbs. per day in less than load lots.

The depot was an interesting place in the early day. There were from 4 to 6 passenger trains daily plus a freight each way. Besides the usual traffic and freight there was at times rather much interest in the surreptitious shipment of liquor into town. This particular piece of business depended largely on the whim of the agent in charge. Some of the "boys" thought it quite a joke to order their whisky in the name of some of the most staid citizens. The agent was however, always in on the plan and delivered the goods to the right parties.

There was plenty of work for a man and team. We recall the old butcher wagon, the old ice delivery and the local freight business.

Among the teamsters who plied this lost trade were Wm. Autoff, Jake Smith, Bruce White, Jess Sturtevant, "Pard" McPherson, Robert McPherson, Lou Cabbage, Azel Patrick, Ivan Mayne and Ed Morgan.

Livery stable owners included Jeff Thornburgh, Joe Wilcox, Hugh McDevitt, John Cannon, John Sheehy, W. E. Lair and the last barn was owned by Dall Moses and Ed Morgan. Each town usually had 5 or 6 teams for hire. The early day doctors used this method of travel a great deal. Lennie Maynard did not do much of driving for hire in those days. He reports that a trip to Perry cost about \$2 and took about a half day to complete.

Horses and mules were used in great numbers to make the road and grade for the Milwaukee double track in 1912-14.

## THE STEEL MULE

Shortly after the first World War the Kempf boys created a mild sensation on main street with a mechanical monstrosity called the "Steel Mule." This signalled the beginning of the end for horse and mule. As the years rolled by the tractor improved and its use has been accepted universally.



# SPORTS

Jamaica was an avid baseball town from around 1920. The early day games were played on a diamond which was laid out on the ground that is across the tracks and what is now south main street. There was also a track for horse racing that encircled the field.

Early day stars included Ora Correy who had a statewide reputation as Jamaica's kid pitcher. He was blessed with a variety of stuff, with plenty of speed and good control. He was offered a try at pro ball but his promising career was short that same spring when the playful toss of a rock on a nearby fence damaged his arm so badly that his pitching days were over.

## ALBERT WEIDMAN

Another well remembered old timer was Albert Weidman, a catcher. This was in the days before the catchers wore big mitts and other of the protectors that were developed later. "Al" was a tall wiry fellow with all the grit and determination in the world. When he was around 60 years old he appeared in an old timers game at Yale and did a credible job behind the plate.

Jamaica's grand old man of baseball J. E. "Ed" Garfield was a young hurler with promise, about the turn of the century. He injured his flipper when he came in off his railroad one afternoon to pitch a high school game for his friend P. Kinney. He was not in shape and during the game injured his shoulder muscles to such an extent that thereafter he was forced to throw underhanded and confine his ball playing to the right field position on the old Jamaica Greys which he managed for many years.

## EARLY DAY BASEBALL PLAYERS AND FANS



L to R, top row, Cora Towne, E. Correy and Ida Smith. Middle row, Grace Lamp, Arch Smith, Al Weidman, and Myra Towne. Bottom row, Dollie Garrity, Ed Garrity, Bertha Polley, Ora Correy and Clara Swenson.

### FABULOUS SCOTTY

It was about 1910 to 1920 that baseball was at its best here. It was after Scotty Walker had been injured in pro ball and returned home. Scotty still had enough left to be a star semipro circles. Others on the squad included Blaine Parham, diminutive and scrappy shortstop; Claire Heater, a hard hitting second baseman; and Raymond Correy, a speedy fielder at first base. Outfielders included Leo Garland, a fast little leadoff man and Ed Garrity was a fixture in right field. Ivan "Shake" Adams, Ray Poole and Charles Towne were also on the squad. Ray was a most versatile player as he could give a good account of himself at any position.

For the most part the catchers were imported. They included Wyatt of Farnhamville and Fish and Ellis of Des Moines. Reid Thompson did some of the pitching but in later

years the team depended on the hook ball throwing of "Left Al Fagen.

Many hard and cleanly fought games were had with Ripp who were led by the three Crumley brothers; Yale with Weidman boys and unforgettable "Slim" Truax and his blazing fast ball, and also, Bouton with their hustling bunch of bunt and fast base runners. Bayard, Coon Rapids and Perry games sometimes ended in a rhyubarb. Gilkerson's Union Giants and Brown's Tennessee Rats, both talented colored teams, played here frequently.

It was the usual practice of most small towns to end the season with a two day tourney between four teams, with winners playing for the top money on the final day. It was at such a tourney in 1916 that the final game produced a contest that is still being talked about. This was the way it happened.

### **TANK TOWN TOURNEY**

Jamaica and Yale had each won their first round games and were out to get the big one. Each team had spiked up with nearby semipro and the day of the big game dawned bright and sunny.

### **MUSSER AND BREEN**

About the middle of the morning word reached manager Garrity via the grapevine that Yale was going all out to win this one and had secured a top Western League battery—Pete Musser and Dick Breen from Des Moines to work the game. Musser was in his prime at this time and as is shown by his records he had the lowest earned run average in the league and this record still stands today.

To counter this move the local team hired Roy Radebau of Rippey, who had pitched in the Southern League.

Just before game time Art Ewoldt, also a pro and a teammate of Musser and Breen came to manager Garrity and begged for a chance to play so he was at the hot corner for the local team. Free of Manning was at short, Heater at second and Correy at first base. Fish was behind the plate. The outfield had Gland in left, Chuck Towne, center, and the identity of the right fielder is now unknown.

### **A PITCHER'S BATTLE**

It was a pitcher's battle right from the start. Radebau had a fine curve and good control and Musser knew all

ks of the trade and also pitched very effectively. In the  
r innings Musser got to throwing the "shine" ball which  
tough to hit.

Tension mounted with every pitch as each scoreless inning  
t by. From about the third frame on several gamblers  
n Jefferson would walk through the crowd waving money  
offering 2 to 1 that Yale wouldn't score the next inning.

In the sixth, Breen got as far as second for Yale but was  
ed by a nifty pickoff play from Radebaugh to Free.

Then came the fatal 7th and Ewoldt was due up. He told  
bench he was going to try for a walk. He made good on  
prediction by drawing a free ticket. Once on first he  
assed his Des Moines team mates and finally not only  
e second but third as well. He then scored easily on a fly  
enter field for the only run of the game.

## **JAMAICA AGAINST THE WORLD**

Another well remembered game was aganst Rippey at the  
nty fair. Claude Lundy had a salaried team at Cooper  
ch included the famous Grant Brothers from Madrid. He  
nted to see Jamaica beaten so he offered his stars to bolster  
Rippey lineup. It was to no avail however as Al Fagen  
ne up with one of his pitching gems and won by a 3 to 1  
re in a 13 inning battle. Ray Correy hit a homer for the  
als in this game.

## **MINBURN MASSACRE**

Manager Garrity's favorite game was played at a farm  
eau picnic at Minburn in 1921.

## **BIG LEAGUE**

He took his team of strictly local boys to meet the winners  
the morning game. When Jamaica arrived they found that  
odward had reneged on their promise of using home players  
l had gone all out to win this game. Their lineup included  
h men as Harney and Coleman, the famous battery of the  
icago Union Giants. Harney had worked the morning game  
l he was at first base for Woodward in the final game. Cole-  
n was a superb receiver and used a small feather mitt with  
ich he could handle most pitched balls with one hand.  
odward's pitcher was a member of the Des Moines league  
m.



## BUTCH SLAMS ONE

Manager Garrity at first refused to play the game but finally given a straight guarantee and the contest went on. The locals played good ball and won by a decisive margin. Towne who was a kid just out of high school played center field and slammed a 3 and 2 pitch for a home run with the bases loaded. Fagen pitched his usual good game and also batted out a homer.

Several attempts were made to revive semipro ball during the years that followed but the ventures never met much success.

Rev. Harlan Kishpaugh organized a team of youngsters in 1941 and provided the spark to rekindle interest in the game.

A few years later Jerry Kinney managed a group of youth-teen-agers through several seasons. From the above groups came the nucleus of our recently successful high school nines.

# SCHOOL SPORTS

The early schools provided practically no equipment of kind so the youngsters naturally turned to games they would develop on their own initiative.

Young or old, fast or slow, they could all enter wholeheartedly into a game like "Blackman" and have loads of fun. There was also the inevitable game of "dog pile" which tended to curb the playground bullies. "Crack the Whip" was good a few times until the teacher heard the wail of the kid who was either daring or unlucky enough to be the "cracker."

## SHINNY

Shinny, a crude form of hockey, played with a small milk can for a puck was a popular game with the more spirited boys. The lad who failed to heed the clarion call of "shinny on your own side" would likely get rapped on his shins. The shinny pucks were of natural growth and by some quirk of nature the best ones were always to be found in the center of dad's best apple tree.

Then there was a form of football which was a combination of rugby and soccer with a few innovations added by the boys. The ball was usually provided by some youngster who had secured it by selling garden seeds or a healing salve to his neighbors. After several days play in the dewy grass the much prized football would expand to twice its original size. Then the bladder would bust but the game would still go on by the simple expediency of stuffing the cover with grass.

The first warm days of spring would bring out the marble players with their cigar boxes filled with "commies, crockies, marbles and the prized shooter."

Mumbly Peg was played with a jack knife and had an endless number of variations.

But the game of games was baseball. Improvisations of equipment was limited only by the player's ingenuity. A string ball and a bat shaped from a board was all the beginners needed. Often some more fortunate lad would salvage a bat the older players had cracked. This was a real prize.

## **ANTE OVER**

One boy alone would "ante" the ball off the roof and t for the rebound. Two boys would of course play catch, wh three to seven players meant a hot game of "one old ca Over seven was enough for choosing up sides with first choi going to the last hand hold on a tossed bat.

"Playing catch" was a sport indulged in by young and alike on the main street during the warm months.

Competition between schools was not too common before 1920. There was a year or so of football, however, and so baseball every year. The playing of non students was common practice in the early days. Usually such an act w clothed in an air of respectability by having these "ringer appear for perhaps one class on the day of the game. It w not too unusual to see the coach playing as a member of t school team.

Also occasionally two of the small towns would jo forces and tackle some larger rival. Around 1915 Jamaica a Dawson combined their football teams and tackled Boone a Dallas Center. Both games ended with the local boys on t short end of the score. The Estey boys, Steve and Carl Ry and Mike Garland were the top players for Jamaica.

In 1921 our school was consolidated and the high scho was extended to the regular accredited 12 grades and the scho teams operated under the rules of the state association.

## **BIRTH OF BASKETBALL**

F. M. Mounts, who was the first superintendent, was veteran basketball referee and he introduced the game here.

The first games here were played mostly on outdoor cour Transportation was also a problem and so most of the out town games were with teams west of town. They could reached by catching the west bound Milwaukee "Dinky" at du and making the return trip home on the same train as it co pleted its run from Manilla back to Perry.

## **Jamaica's First Basketball Team 1920-21**



**Top left to right, Bernard Ellis, Leo McDermott, F. M. [unclear]. Bottom, Howard Dunn, Ben McDermott, Everett Ellis, [unclear] O'Connell and Bruce F. Towne.**

During the late twenties Superintendent W. E. Thompson won winning teams in both baseball and boys basketball. The team won the Scranton Invitational Tourney three times and made trips to Ames twice for the state meet. Both times they were eliminated in the early rounds by the ultimate champions. Young "Lefty" Scott Walker and Delbert Ellis did most of the heavy work for the locals. Delbert was later quite highly regarded for his catching ability in semipro ball.

### **IRON MAN**

In 1927 Ralph Towne took over the pitching chores with Ed Templeton as his receiver. In the one day tourney at Scranton, young Towne pitched two five inning games and the team won the frame final and won all three games. He fanned 28 batters in the 17 innings.

"Mickey" Armstrong was the hitting hero of the day by hitting 6 doubles in 7 trips to the plate.



## AN IOWA RECORD

In 1925 the lowest scoring basketball game ever played in Iowa was here in a contest with Cooper which the locals won by a 3 to 1 score. Estle Templeton made the only field goal in this hotly contested game that was played in the old Westbrook store building.

The cage team of this era was paced by the hot shooter Clarence "Beaver" Payton. For the first time the county tourney was organized and the local boys made the finals on several occasions.

Poor coaching was largely responsible for the indifference showing of the early girls teams.

### "HI" TAKES OVER

This was changed when S. C. Highbarger took over the job in the early forties. In his first year he developed one of our better teams. The front court included high scoring Clethr Johnson, the reliable captain Jean Gannon and clever Jean Senter. The back court was headed by Delores McDermott the first of four sisters who all became mainstays on late Jamaica teams. Our gals handed mighty Coon Rapids a stunning upset in the sub-state at Stuart that year.

Coon Rapids gained revenge at Manning a few years later by beating what many consider to have been our strongest squad.

A year later in 1948 saw our girls finest effort when the squad coached by Jack Grant was beaten by Slater in the sub-state finals by a close margin. Members of the team include Virginia Hanson, Maurice McDermott, and Mary Williams a forward and the back court included Lila Ackerman, Connie Hanson, Beverly Walker and Anita Foster.

Others whom we recall over the years include Joan Garland who was all-county three years and one of the best set shots in the state and her sister, Rose, who later starred at a guard position. The Patrick sisters, Faye and Nila, the stout hearted Burk sisters at guard, Betty Hume, Phyliss Pardun and last but not least, diminutive Jackie Ellis, who was the only girl to win a letter five years in Jamaica.

Boys basketball also progressed on through the years with honors mostly being of an individual nature. In 1949, the boys got as far as the district where they ran up against Ankeny

who was the big team in Class B at that time. Morris Correy carved a niche in the local hall of fame by holding all-state Fontana of Ankeny scoreless from the floor.

In the fall of 1954 the age old dreams of local fans began to come true. The baseball team won their first sectional in many years.

With "Chuck" Kuhns as coach they duplicated their success the spring of '55, breezed on through the district and finally lost in the sub state to Massena by a 3 to 2 score. The success of the team hinged largely on the fine battery work of Ethan Towne and Bob Van Gundy. These two stalwarts also led in the hitting department, with Towne having a four year average of .440.

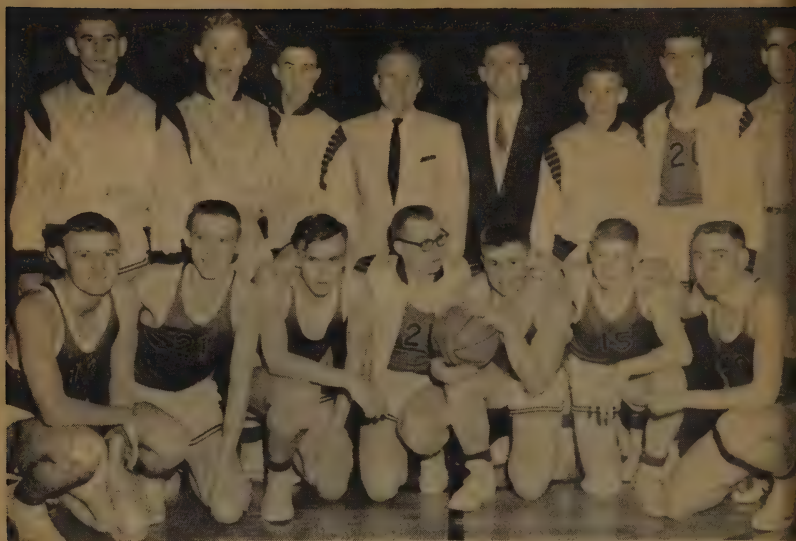
In the fall of '55 under the charge of "Chuck" Neubauer the boys drilled hard in an attempt to go "all the way." Fate was on their side again as they beat a good Grand Junction squad 10-0 in extra innings. Then for the second straight year they defeated Collins in the district finals and went down to defeat in their only loss of the season.

With the baseball season over, the boys turned to basketball and under the skillful hand of Coach Neubauer they prepared for the toughest schedule in Jamaica history. They were undaunted by a series of mid-season illnesses and injuries and were ready at tournament time. Picked under-dogs in almost every game they rolled over teams that had beaten them during the regular season and finally capped their march to the state meet with a thrilling 65-61 victory over Urbandale after trailing by one point with 48 seconds to play.

This was the first boys team from Guthrie County ever to make it to the state tourney. Members of the first string were Gordon and James Van Gundy, Hal Hanson, Ethan Towne, Ted Robinson and Gary McDermott.

Present day heroes seem unreplacable but next year always seems to find stalwarts and the show goes on. As Coach Neubauer so often quoted, "The older I get the better I was."

## THEY MADE IT!



Top row, left to right, Todd, Dueland, Coach Neubaue Supt. Stern, Nicholas, Moore and Sheehy. Bottom row, left to right, McDermott, Hanson, Robinson, Lumley, G. Van Gundy, Red Van Gundy and Towne.

### AN ORIGINAL POEM READ BY THE AUTHOR AT THE SPORTS BANQUET IN 1956 LITTLE RED (1956)

Draw back the veil that hides the past,  
and recall old heroes that were fast,  
Start with Ellis number one—  
that clever dribbler we called Lum.  
In twenty-six we almost did the trick,  
with Pus and Frank and Scott and Mick.  
It was their star Beaver who tossed the ball,  
for most the length of Drake's great hall.  
Old timers say it made the book,  
and nearly tore the basket from its nook.  
We must recall the Meinecke clan;  
Their boy Bud was quite a man.  
Then came hot-shot Dub and fancy Billy,

With a season's record that's a dilly.  
And Captain Correy who gets my vote,  
High among the heroes worthy of note.  
There were many more along the way,  
but fame is fleeting or so they say.  
So let's hurry along and name the play,  
that lit the torch when skies were gray.  
It was at the nearby county seat,  
and those city slickers had us beat.  
With seconds to go I peered across  
and saw despair on the face of the boss.  
The frost on his roof appeared to melt  
and all the spirit seemed to wilt.  
He tore his towel as he heard the wail  
From across the hall of a fainting frail.  
She slumped into a sheltered swoon  
and missed the tension of the room.  
But the Ump above in Paradise  
now chose again to roll the dice.  
Fans gasped for air as they waited to see,  
who the hero or the goat would be,  
Would fate choose Hal, Brownie or big Ted,  
to make the play to go ahead.  
Stout fellows, these, with Gordie and Bill,  
but it took another to top the hill.  
Recall again the shape we were in,  
when the little feller committed his sin.  
All but the faithful had given up,  
and were hanging their tails like a beaten pup.  
The big town boys were confident now,  
but the mite waited not to clean their plow.  
On his mother's knee, when a little tike,  
he heard how the Dutch boy saved the dike.  
And of little George and the cherry tree,  
where courage and truth—made history.  
Spurred on by visions he thrust out his chin  
and lammed the big bully a chop on the shin.  
The startled ump blew his whistle loud,  
and a tomb like silence fell on the crowd.  
The shot was missed and coming on fast  
our boys took command and won at last.  
Oh boy, a trip to the STATE we started to howl,  
All dreams came true by Red and his foul.



# RELIGION

The religious life of the pioneer was such as to attract the attention of those in more favored places.

As the area became more settled, crusading evangelists began drifting in from the east. They had "heard the call" to save the souls of the supposedly heathen mid-westerners.

But the pioneer was no hypocrite. If he believed in honesty, racing, whisky drinking, or card playing or anything of a like nature he practiced them openly and above board. One early day character made it a regular practice to down a few beers on Sunday morning and thus fortified would "accidentally" meet the preacher coming from the morning worship. Then the sot would remove his hat and make a sweeping bow as he introduced himself.

But those who were of a religious turn of mind were not ashamed to own it. The pioneer clung to the faith of his fathers, at least for a time. If he was a Presbyterian he was not ashamed of it but rather prided himself on being of the "elect." If a Methodist he was one to the fullest extent. He prayed long and loud and cared nothing for the empty formalities of religion.

Early day services were held in the homes and later in the country school. Father told of hearing a noisy evangelist at time at historic Old Bunker Hill School. As the speaker warmed to his task he began driving home his remarks by pounding on a large book on the teacher's desk and shouting "I believe every word in this blessed old book." The congregation nodded in agreement with suppressed amusement. They saw he was pounding not on the Bible as he supposed, but instead on the school dictionary.

Summer time meetings were held in tents near Graceland Lake or Greenbrier Creek. Two young blades of the community enlivened one such service by dragging a hornet's nest at the end of a long cord as they made their unabashed way to the front row.

In 1879 the Methodists organized the first church in

ity. It was a part of the Panther circuit and the Rev. F. was pastor. In 1883 the same group erected a 24 x 36 church in Jamaica with the Rev. J. D. Prince as pastor with H. E. Hulbert, J. J. Quiggans and E. Munger acting as trustees.

The Church of Christ with the Rev. W. H. Coates as pastor the United Brethren with the Rev. S. S. Eslick as pastor were organized soon after.

The typical service was usually one of enthusiasm. The singing was entered into with gusto as the singers were accompanied on the old reed organ. Baby sitting was as yet unknown and the whole family went to church. The younger quite often went to sleep before the long services were over.

As soon as the little folks were able to toddle and talk they were pressed to take part in the numerous programs.

Christmas was the big event of the year. The tallest pine the building could accomodate was brought in and decorated to the nth degree. The biggest doll was awarded the choice position at the top of the tree.

The following article in the Joker of 1894 describes the occasion very well; "Christmas has come, and as we were gathered on towards the eve when all children have a longing in their hearts for the morrow to know what good old Santa Claus has seen fit to give them from his massive collection. The members of the Christian Church Sunday School invited in their families and had a "treat" distribution. Later on, after supper the U. B. and Methodist had a like distribution. The churches were all beautifully decorated for the occasion and the exercises were in accordance with the time—Christmas Greetings. The Methodist people had spared no time nor work in making their exercises a grand success and were rewarded for their efforts by the attendance of a very large crowd. Santa Claus made his appearance in due time to the great delight of the little folks who distributed among them tokens from the tree. All present were appropriately reminded that this was the eve for replenishing the hearts of the little ones."

On the other extreme was the sadness of the community at the death of a beloved neighbor. The burial service was indeed a very somber affair. Black was the prevailing color for the croud, casket and the horse drawn hearse.

At a given signal the sexton would start the mournful tolling of the church bell, as the saddened procession neared the edge

of town and would continue until the service started. S  
preachers on such occasion waxed highly evangelistic  
usually the sermon was in high praise of the deceased.

Obituaries were long and flowery. The following is a  
of one written by a local editor in 1894.

"Gone to rest." Today, an earthly home welcomes a pre  
new born soul, perfect in form—a mere bud just bursting  
a beautiful flower; we have never seen anything more lo  
and we are delighted as never before; we cherish it and watch  
development with proud hearts; we admire its perfectness;  
idolize that soul because our love is centered there and in  
our hope.

Tomorrow we are bowed in sorrow because there has b  
death; our loved one is gone—is dead. The grave claim  
as its own and we are not to call back the departed soul.  
Lord hath given and the Lord taketh away. But oh,  
cheerless everything seems and the world is a desolate p  
no hope, no comfort anywhere; nothing but the sting of inno  
death.

Today we walk alongside the sparkling brooklet as it w  
here and there among the hills and down the picturesque val  
in the soft sunlight; we behold the lovely rose as it sways to  
fro in the cool breeze beneath yonder tree, and the lily  
unfolds her petals at the waters edge; to the right; to the  
here, there, everywhere is life, beauty and hope. We  
happy; we have health and there is nothing to cloud our p  
way; on and on we go; full of joy, cheerful; not concerned a  
the next step or whither we are wandering.

Tomorrow we stand on the banks of the river and  
there is driftwood and the water bubbles and foams and ru  
hither, thither in madness. On the opposite side dead le  
from the sturdy oak litter the ground and decaying limbs  
broken and crash to earth as piercing winds come with a  
force. We look here and there but there is no beauty; ev  
thing is doleful and we are alone.

What shall we do? Where will we go? Ah, that v  
and just across the river those beautiful becoming hands.  
are not earthly and what does this mean? But here  
thoughts of a departed one near and dear, springs up in  
mind. Yes, we heard that voice say "Good-bye" just a  
while ago and asked us to meet it in heaven, and those h  
perhaps are the ones that wiped a tear from our cheek a  
leaned over the loved one on the death-bed. Indeed we

prepare to cross the dark river, to meet our darling again. We  
take new courage and strive to make the best of things while  
our life shall be spared this side of the river of eternity.

We know today naught of what might happen tomorrow—  
early Wednesday morning, little did the many friends of ———  
think his good wife would so soon be called to leave his  
humble abode to seek a home in the hereafter. But it was  
God's will and she went to meet her Master, a true Christian  
heart."

### MERGING

As early as 1903 the Protestant Churches began talk of  
merging, and in 1919 the Christian, Methodist and part of the  
B. congregations combined as the Union Church. The  
merger was accomplished largely through the efforts of Dean  
German Kirk of Drake University. F. F. Stover was the first  
pastor.

A few years later the former Methodist building was des-  
troyed by fire and the Union group purchased the United Bre-  
thren church edifice and thus completed the final merger of  
the Protestant groups. David Stewart is the present minister.

Saint Josephs Catholic Church was built in 1903. The Rev.  
J. Kelliher of Bayard has been in charge of Saint Josephs  
for the past 20 years.



# JAMAICA U. S. A.

The name Jamaica is thought by some scholars to be derived from the Spanish word "Haymaca," meaning "Isle of Spring." Others claim that the city of Jamaica, N. Y. was named after a tribe of Indians called the "Jamecoas." "Jameco" means beaver and this animal once abounded in that area.

Smallest of the Jamaicas is a settlement in Nebraska which at the present is only a country church with a few nearby parishioners.

Jamaica, Georgia, is a freight stop on the Atlantic Seaboard Railroad.

Jamaica, Illinois, is a small hamlet of some 200 people.

Jamaica, Virginia, is a very small community served by a combination general store and postoffice. It claims no particular historical background.

Jamaica, Vermont, by Mildred M. Perry, postmaster.

This town was first settled in 1775 by a man and his sons, who had cleared the land and built their houses the year before. They moved in June 16, 1775, and the next day heard the roar of the cannon at the battle of Bunker Hill.

A charter was granted in 1780 when 54 men paid nine pounds of lawful money for each right.

The town is nestled in the West River Valley, in the eastern foothills of the Green Mountains. It is beautiful country but too rocky for very good farm land except in the valley along the river. Mountains of rock rise above us to the north, west and south of the village. Lumbering is the main industry and in the spring maple sugar is produced quite extensively.

The population is about 600 in the area with the town proper being around 240 people. We have a beautiful non-consolidated grade school but no high school. We have two grocery stores and two antique stores. Our Federated Church is made up of Baptist and Congregational members and we have a wonderful minister. Two lumber dealers have mills in the area while provide work for some. Others work in near

ns. Two garages, a coffee shop and a postoffice comprise public buildings of the town. The majority of the village e-owners are retired people.

Social groups include the Masons, Eastern Star, Christian Vice Council and Woman's Benefit Society.

Rail service was discontinued in 1933 and business is now conducted by truck with the nearest railroad center which Brattleboro, about 25 miles away.

If one likes the mountains it is a beautiful place to live and where you may truthfully say, "I will lift up mine eyes to the hills from whence cometh my help."

### **JAMAICA, NEW YORK**

Jamaica, New York was founded over 300 years ago.

The first settlers came from Hempstead and the first written deed is a conveyance by the Indians on September 5, 1614. Farming and cattle were the main industries and Jamaica prospered. The growth of New York City increased the demand on the resources of Long Island.

The most important factor in the growth of Jamaica was the road through the sea, and what is known today as Jamaica Avenue.

Churches were established at an early date. The oldest cemetery dates back to 1668 and is still in existence. The oldest building in Jamaica is the King Manor house. It is the home of Rufus King who was a prominent revolution-patriot.

During the revolution Jamaica had its own company of 56 militiamen and the battle of Long Island was fought in its precincts. The people, however, were at odds because of their political beliefs. Toryism was rife because of English ancestry and by the time the war was over many of the pioneers of Jamaica had fled because of persecutions and land confiscations.

In 1810 the city was shocked by a terrific earthquake. The city charter was granted in 1814. Horse racing was set up in 1821 at Union Course. Slavery was abolished in 1827. The Long Island Railroad was established in 1836.

With the growth of New York and Brooklyn the farmers of Long Island gave up general farming and turned to truck farming. They pioneered winter production of hot house vegetables and organized the first farmers co-op.

Jamaica is 10 square miles in area and is located 11 miles east of Manhattan.

It has a population of over 200,000 people and is among leading railroad centers of the country. The high school is one of the finest in the state and the armory is one of the largest in the country. Idlewild airport is the largest in the world and is located here.

The United Nations' development, accomodating 2,000 persons is within a few blocks of the business district.

Jamaica is the horse racing center of the state with three tracks near by.

Arterial highways, leading to other boroughs and to Long Island, pass through Jamaica, New York.

# OLD JAMAICA STORES

A favorite local story is the one where a store clerk saw a nigger snitching cigars and hiding them in his hat. The clerk took the son of the soil into a friendly sparring match, during which the hat was "accidentally" knocked off and the stogies scattered on the floor.

## SOME SHOOTING

Uncle Harlow Towne once shot 47 ducks in one day, bagging mallards with one shot.

## A DIRTY STORY

Years ago three of our youngsters were playing around a local depot. One lad feeling the call of nature went into one of the outhouses to relieve himself and some way lost his balance and fell into the pit. His buddies eventually rescued him with the aid of a long pole. The unfortunate lad was as green as grass as he stood there bawling and reeking to high heaven. With typical small boy expediency the rescuers began throwing buckets of cold water on the distressed lad, with some success. When they escorted him home where a loving mother completed the cleaning up.

## A LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

A local housewife once sued her husband for non-support. In an effort to establish a background with which to contest the case the errant spouse went to a local merchant for a letter of recommendation. It so happened that he owed the grocer a back bill of considerable amount. The merchant, however, made no mention of this but agreeably went to his desk and wrote a few lines on a paper that he sealed in an envelope and handed to the man. As soon as the fellow left the store the clerk inquired of his boss as to the recommendation he had made for such a man. The grocer replied that he had written "Yes, we have extended credit to Mr. ——— but we wished to God he hadn't."





**ERNEST L. TOWNE**

**Jamaica, Businessman from 1890 to 1933**

Many have said that you can take boy from the farm you can't take the farm from the boy. This was certainly of father. Although he remained in business until his death never quite lost his love for the land. His hobbies atteste

t. . He bred and exhibited pure bred chickens, raised a small  
k of milk cows and developed a strain of seed corn which  
k first prize at the Ames show and took second at the Inter-  
tional Show in Chicago.

He was the town's most prolific builder with three homes  
l the store building.

Father started in business here as a barber. To augment  
income he also had a small candy stock, and of all things,  
oil of soup for his Saturday customers.

He was burned out twice in the first few years by the  
astrous fires that swept the west business block.

In 1895 he built the brick store building now occupied by  
author.

His was the typical general store. The stock included  
rything from kerosene to pianos.

He had a great fund of stories that he delighted in telling.  
Local baseball held a great interest for him and he was  
official scorer here for many years.

### — THEN —



Dad's Store About 1911

o R Mabel Towne, Mrs. Guy Towne, Mike Flynn, Asa  
onnell, Dad and Mike Garland. Seated, Gaylord Pittman.



Mr. and Mrs. Bruce F. Towne (1958)

### MOONLIGHT MADNESS

About every 15 or 20 years the town council would gather around and pass a curfew law. But such rulings were never seriously enforced. This does however bring to mind of a favorite story which is so typical of Jamaica, and concerns a council meeting of the early 20's. My favorite uncle has served several terms and although perhaps lacking the loquacious manner of a politician, he could usually be counted on for a terse comment when the situation demanded it. The other council members being younger and less experienced, he listened to some complaints concerning the actions of the younger generation in the evenings at the city park. They discussed the problem for some time among themselves. Finally they called on my favorite uncle for his opinion. His classic reply was, "I believe that there is a federal law that prohibits anyone from disturbing the breeding places of wild animals."

### HOME RUN IN A SILO

In 1944 George Benson was playing baseball with a service team in the Solomon Islands. While at bat he hit a long home foul that crashed into the cabin of a low flying two-seater plane that was over the area. The impact broke the pilot's jaw and only the quick action of the other flyer averted a crackup. F





## HIGH SOCIETY

A society item from the same paper read, "Miss Ber Shipley entertained a number of young people on Thurs evening. Prizes were offered to those sewing the most car rags. Cora Towne and Blaine Parmenter won first prize wh was closely contested by Dr. Seidler and Myra Towne, but doctor had wrapped his handkerchief around his ball of and so lost the prize. Mrs. Ed Garrity and Scott Walker v the booby prize."

## THE DISGUSTED IRISHMAN

The spring of '47 was one of the wettest on record : farmers in this area were filled with despair. Acres had to replanted and some was left untilled that season. Ca feeders had to wallow through a sea of mud and manure in effort to feed their animals. Old farm ponds that had b dry for years filled with the heavy rains and water stood al the road in many places.

Late in June travelers along Highway 141 were astoun one morning by a strange sight. By the side of the road the waters edge was a white wooden cross inscribed 1901-19 Nearby was what appeared to be the legs of a man who dived off into the mud and water and had stuck there with body buried from his head to his waist. The legs were enca in hip boots and bore a sign "Mike Garland-Disgusted." bouquet of flowers were displayed nearby and these were placed several times by some unknown person.

Mike was quite a kidder and he suspected some of Jamaica boys had a hand in the affair but the guilty party ne made himself known.

Mike had told a few of them that if he was as homely they were he would go stick his head in a lake. He concluc that they had decided that this was the time and the lake w handy.

## A MYSTERIOUS MAN

The railroad was often distressed by thieves stealing st from boxcars on the siding of Herndon. On one such occasi they surprised the guilty parties and in the ensuing frac one of the robbers was wounded by a shotgun blast. managed to escape however and made his way to the home the local scavenger where he hid out for several weeks. Af his wounds had healed the scavenger hid the culprit in l scavenger tank wagon and smuggled him to Perry where

American literature where the hero of a story didn't come off for parts unknown. It must have been the only time "smelling like a rose."

## THE OLD FIRST WILLOW

The pasture and timber region north of town holds many memories and ties with the early days of Jamaica.

Here were the town slaughterhouses that furnished meat for the community. The sodded remnants of the old ice dam still visible. Here and there the ruts of the old road still remain: all mute memory of the activity of the early days.

It was here at the first willow that the waters of Little Creek carved out a small fishing and swimming hole where young Jamaicans whiled away many a happy hour. The waters abounded with sunfish, chubs and an occasional bullhead. All were easily tempted with a garden worm that dangled on the end of a small hook and line; weighted with a lead sinker on a grocery store cord hung from a willow pole. When fishing grew dull here was a safe place to doff the faded overalls and the flour-sack B. V. D.'s and indulge in a little "mud crawling." There would be the inevitable cry of "hoss fly" with screams of mock terror.

And then to a lunch of green onion sandwiches and hard-boiled eggs, that a thoughtful mother had provided. Occasionally this would be augmented by a brace or two of frog legs broiled over an open fire in mom's second best skillet. Dame Nature had caused the old willow to grow in a horizontal position before ascending skyward and here was a natural picnic place.

Many a small boy found pleasure in using the rushing waters to turn an orange crate paddle wheel or to float a shingle boat.

The first warm Sunday in spring found the hills filled with boys and dads flying home made kites. An occasional "store-bought" box kite, would show up and the owner would just sit out get the thing flying and the cord would break.

The 4th of July always saw at least one red, white and blue paper balloon that was "gassed up" by lighting a gas-soaked wad of excelsior to the center of the bottom hoop. Then the owner sounded wordless prayers that the balloon would not be ignited by the first blast of flame.

The pasture was inhabited by dozens of ground squirrels that were snared or drowned out.

Many lads earned their first nickel driving the town cow to and from the pasture. And woe unto the youngster who old "Bossy" suddenly became sexy. Brother Vic was once called on the carpet by dad because he struck for higher pay. He had been getting 25c a month and wanted a raise and one neighbor complained to father.

Vacation days saw many sham battles between the "cow boys and indians". Home made pistols, tomahawks and shing darts and an occasional cap pistol were all used in the terrifying battles that were for the most part verbal.

Winter time found more pleasure here. The gentle slopes were ideal for coasting and the skating was fair.

The Little creek makes twenty-nine tortuous turns ere it departs through the north pasture fence. In the days of old this seemed to be the plan of nature to hold the sparkling water for the pleasure of youth.

Now all is changed. The old first willow is still there but the stately beauty is almost gone and only the gnarled and straggly skeleton remains. It looks for all the world like a rheumatic old man who has lived beyond his time.

Where laughing children once waded there now sprawl the gaunt remains of an ancient "Chevvy". The rear light peeks crazily as if it were a one eyed monster from a fairy-book tale.

The Little creek trickles discouragingly and the bends that once gave beauty to the stream now appears as the convulsion of a tormented gut in the throes of expelling the stinking vomit that now corrupts this hallowed spot. Such is the price of progress.

## THE JEWEL OPERA HOUSE

The old opera house was built around 1900 and was named by George W. Heater for his only daughter Jewel. It had a large stage and seated several hundred people. As many as 16 square dance sets could be accommodated at one time.

Shortly after the theater was built a group of young people in the community staged a series of successful home talent plays. The profit of these productions was used to buy scenery for the stage. The group was directed by Cora Towne.



**The 20th Century Dramatic Club**

Left to right, top row: Wes Henry, Cora Towne, Ivar Towne, Myra Towne and Scott Walker. Center row: Jessie Bitter, Ora Correy and Chas. Moore. Bottom row: Cy Lundy, Bertha Shipley and Mahlon Heater.

It was the center of activity during the winter season. Among the various actions besides the school plays and operettas were political meetings, box socials, lodge meetings and dances. The floor was regarded as one of the best in this section of the state. John Tighe managed the dances for several seasons, during which the Bell Brothers of Carroll were quite popular as the music makers.

Winter lyceum attractions were once well received here. A negro musical comedy group company played to packed houses on several occasions.

Various stock companies "made" the town, the Charles and Mary Slawson players being the most popular.



Not to be forgotten were the numerous "Medicine Shows". These were usually put on by three people, the "Doctor", wife and a flunky. They had an amazing repertoire of sketch recitations and musical numbers. The usual successful gimmick was the prize awarded to the most popular girl in town. The contest was decided on the number of votes received. 7 votes were given with each box of soap, bottle of medicine or other junk the "Doctor" was selling.

The local commercial club purchased a projector and showed weekly movies here about the time of World War 1. Besides the regular show they would have one reel of so-called silent pictures to keep the crowd coming back each week. The project declined in popularity and finally stopped when an itinerant showman stole the lens from the machine. The building was sold to the Masons in 1921 and thus ended one of the most interesting phases of small town life.

## JAMAICA GETS NATIONAL PUBLICITY



The Legion picture was taken during the parade at the national convention at Atlantic City, September 1957.

Newspaper photographers and television cameras singled out as one of the floats in the parade receiving the greatest applause. The theme of the float was the "Korn Kings". Leo is piloted the float, (Iowa Legionnaire)

Members of the band included Keith Altemeier, Dee Jones, Arnold Beddow, Joel Beddow, Jim Crabb, Gary McDermott, Bruce F. Towne and the "king" Les Overman.

Also in the parade was Elvin "Dutch" Meinecke driving a tractor which pulled a big ear of corn in a trailer.

This year a trampoline was mounted on a trailer and pulled behind the model T. A group of fellows under the tutelage coach Corrick performed as the unit moved along the parade route. The theme of the float was, "When it comes to corn we've got the jump on 'em"

The device won the \$250 first prize at the state convention in Des Moines and appeared at the national parade in Chicago on Labor Day. The effort was again successful and the legion post received recognition from the National Legion Committee.

### **PIONEER PROPRIETY**

On a certain time, when it was very disagreeable travelling and the houses were few and far between, and the host had stowed away to the best advantage all the humanity that bed and bedding would care for, the landlord was heard to exclaim "No room for another unless he bunk with wife and I."

Hardly had the words been uttered, when "Halloo" was heard, and a horseman claimed shelter and food. The conditions were made known and accepted.

The belated traveler was fed and his clothes dried, and then told to turn in. The host telling his wife to lay over next the wall, told the traveler to pile in, "But I swear you shall sleep in the middle."

### **BATTLE OF BUCKSHOT**

In 1901 father was awakened in the night by the store burglar alarm. He hastened to the scene and exchanged several pistol shots with the robber.

The thief was slightly wounded but made his escape west of town. A small posse was hastily formed and set out down the tracks towards Herndon. Uncle Harlow rode his fastest horse to Herndon and started back east on foot in what was to be a trap for the thief. Instead he met the posse and they could not identify each other in the darkness they got excited and blazed away at each other with their shotguns. Three of the party suffered flesh wounds from the dozens of buckshots that hit them. Luckily they were able to realize their mistake before more serious damage was done. It is a base canon to say that members of the posse took the first blast in the fall and that when Uncle fired the other barrell, a second or two later they were a half mile down the track.

### **THE ACCIDENT FAMILY**

The pioneers had their troubles but the Charles McNeely family of Jamaica has a record that will compare with any of the past.

During the past twelve years the family has suffered the following: Charles — Appendectomy, big toe broken twice

bones broken in foot and arm fractured. Mrs McNeill — injured arm, lacerations of arm, removal of thumb nail and surgery. The oldest son Donnie — pneumonia, broken nose, shingles, chest and both hands injured by exploding fireworks, lacerations of head five times, laceration of the ear, infection in knee-cap from a fall, adenoids and tonsils removed, non-paralytic polio, two kinds of measles and chicken pox. Ronnie — broken neck, ran pitchfork in his back, lacerations of his tongue twice, pneumonia, gland infection, lacerations of head and arms, and also had polio, measles and chicken pox. Cheryl — hospitalized after drinking fuel oil, brain concussion, lacerations of the leg and non-paralytic polio.

### THE PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHER

One of the most interesting characters in our village was called Bill of Bum. Of German extraction, he had a rough life on the road during World War I. He had "made" Jamaica several times before and happened to be here at the outbreak of the second world war. With the confusion of the ration books and etc. he decided to make his home here for the duration.

He claimed to have been across the United States twice before he was sixteen years old. While lacking formal education, he proved to have a keen insight into the character of our society. He was a conversationalist only as the occasion demanded. He said, "Words, words, what do they mean? I am a lawyer and he gives you words and more words, but are they true or false? Only another lawyer can tell. Ask a doctor about his patient. The medic will say, "as well as can be expected." What does he expect? Does he mean the patient will die or does he expect him to get well? More words — just words."

"When I work for a man I try to talk about his favorite subject. When I work for Mr. X we talk about whiskey and women. At his neighbors place we talk about horses and the weather. Another neighbor is only interested in money. So I talk money. This fellow goes to bed as soon as supper is over so he can get up early and start worrying about his money."

### BASEBALL IN THEIR BLOOD

Baseball has always been the favorite sport of our family. Several of the Towne cousins proved to be quite proficient in the game.



The most highly regarded was Scotty Walker who played with a number of teams in Iowa. He was in pro ball for several years. He started in the old three I league and went up to the Southern League where he was hailed as the third baseman Atlanta ever had. He was to have tried with the New York Giants but a "bean-ball" ended his career.

Frank "Doc" Towne was a fleet footed, sharp hitting fielder of the early semi-pro teams.

Charles and Carmen Towne lettered at Iowa State. Towne's infield play was a factor in helping Ames win the conference in the 20's.

Claire Heater was a good solid performer at second base on the old Jamaica Grays.

Ralph Towne followed his fine high school performance here by also making the Iowa State nine.

Brother Vic was a member of the best squads to play for Guthrie County High School. He also caught several seasons of town team ball.

Coming on in the second generation of cousins is Ed Allen Towne. His pitching was a big factor in the success of the local high school a few years back. He is now a Parsippany hurler. Last summer he pitched for Coon Rapids and set a new season's strikeout record and also had a no-hit shutout game in the Central State Amateur League.

## LITTLE TOWN

I like to live in a little town,  
    where the trees meet across the street.  
Where you wave your hand and say "Hello"  
    to everyone you meet.  
I like to stand for a moment  
    outside the grocery store,  
And listen to the friendly gossip.  
    of the folks that live next door.  
For life is interwoven  
    with the friends we learn to know,  
And we hear their joys and sorrows  
    as we daily come and go.  
So I like to live in a little town  
    I care no more to roam,  
For every house in a little town  
    is more than a house, It's Home.

(anon.)

## BEHOLD THE JAMAICAN!

He startles the stranger with his rough humor and unbridled enthusiasm.

He delights in pricking the veneer of the prude.

His generosity is seldom equalled.

His greatest strength is in his strong family ties but the cry of his neighbor's child does not go unheard.

He has great respect for his mate but is virile enough to whistle at the callipygian perfection of the new school-ma'am.

Whether his religious views are based on tolerance or apathy seems of little consequence. The main thing is, that for him, it works.

Wave a flag at him and you start a parade. Riffle a deck of cards and you've got action right now.

Break a leg and he will come knocking on your door with quip on his lips and with both shoulders braced to help carry your load.









JAN 75



N. MANCHESTER,  
INDIANA

